INFORMATION ABOUT THE REFERENDUM ON 23 JUNE 2016

The UK and the European Union:

THE FACTS

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THE UK AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE FACTS

On 23 June, there will be a vote to decide whether the UK should remain a member of the European Union, or leave and take back control. It's a big decision – and there may not be another chance to vote for years. Here are the facts:

- **The UK joined the European Union in 1973.** Back then, it was known as the Common Market. But over the past 43 years, the EU has taken control over more and more areas which don't have anything to do with trade – such as our borders, our public services, and whether prisoners have the right to vote.

- **When we joined, there were just 9 member states.** Now there are 28, the most recent being Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia. Five more countries are being considered for membership: Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey. If they are let in, they will have the same rights as other member states.

- **More than half of net migration to the UK comes from the EU.** More than a quarter of a million people came to the UK from the EU in the 12 months to September 2015 – the equivalent of a city the size of Plymouth or Newcastle in just one year.

- **While we're in the EU, the UK can't make trade deals on our own.** This means we currently have no trade deals with key allies such as Australia, New Zealand or the USA – or important growing economies like India, China or Brazil. Instead of making a deal which is best for the UK, we have to wait for 27 other countries to agree it.

- **The EU costs us £350 million a week.** That's enough to build a new NHS hospital every week of the year. We get less than half of this money back, and we have no control over the way it's spent – that's decided by politicians and officials in Brussels, rather than the people we elect here.

- **You don't have to be a member of the EU to trade with it.** Switzerland is not in the EU and it exports more per person to the EU than we do. The big banks and multinationals might be lobbying to keep us in the EU, but small and medium-sized businesses feel differently. Only 6 per cent of UK firms export to the EU, yet all have to abide by EU regulations on their business.

- **EU law overrules UK law.** This stops the British public from being able to vote out the politicians who make our laws. EU judges have already overruled British laws on issues like counter-terrorism powers, immigration, VAT, and prisoner voting. Even the Government's proposed new deal can be overturned after the referendum: it is not legally binding.

- **There are risks in voting either way.** Experts, politicians, and businesses are divided. People have to weigh up the risks and potential benefits of each course of action for themselves.

Want to know more? Visit **www.eureferendumfacts.org** or text FACTS to **88802** (standard charges apply).*

Do you want to know more about the EU referendum?

To be kept informed, please fill in this form, fold it in half or put it in an envelope, and send it back to the address below for free - no stamp required!

How do you think you will vote in the referendum on 23 June?

1 ☐ I will definitely vote to stay in the European Union

2 ☐ I will probably vote to stay in the European Union

3 ☐ I do not know how I will vote yet

4 ☐ I will probably vote to leave the European Union

5 ☐ I will definitely vote to leave the European Union

Name: .....

Address: .....

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